

VZCZCXRO7039
RR RUEHIK RUEHLN RUEHPD RUEHSK RUEHVK RUEHYG
DE RUEHNT #1538 3651320
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 301320Z DEC 08
FM AMEMBASSY TASHKENT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0181
INFO CIS COLLECTIVE
NATO EU COLLECTIVE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0045
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 0069
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 0061
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 0058
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 0061
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 0069
RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 0045
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC

UNCLAS TASHKENT 001538

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SCA AND DRL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PHUM KPAO OIIP PGOV PREL UZ

SUBJECT: UZBEKISTAN: "ACCESS" PROJECT SUPPORTS THE RIGHTS OF THE DISABLED

11. (U) Earlier this year, the Uzbek Ministry of Labor announced that it signed an agreement to participate in an ACCESS (Accessibility, Civic Consciousness, Employment, and Society Support for Persons with Disabilities) project with several international partners - including UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, and UNFPA - that aims to expand social integration and employment and educational opportunities for disabled persons in Uzbekistan. The project, which began in August 2008 and will end in August 2010, has been implemented in several provinces of the country and has a budget of 415,000 dollars.

12. (U) Noting that some children with disabilities do not currently attend school in Uzbekistan, an October 17 article in the state-controlled UzReport.com website reported that the ACCESS project will aim to overcome this problem by promoting a national model of "inclusive" education in Uzbekistan. As part of the project, six pilot inclusive kindergartens and schools, which educate both children with and without disabilities, were opened this year in the cities of Navoi, Termez, Qarshi, Jizzakh, Samarkand, and Kokand. In October, the ACCESS project held a two-day international conference in Tashkent on inclusive education attended by international experts and government officials, including Uzbekistan's Permanent Representative at UNESCO Lola Karimova, President Karimov's younger daughter, who also is the head of the children's rights NGO Sen Yol'iz Emassan ("You Are Not Alone").

13. (U) Also as part of the ACCESS project, UzReport.com reported on December 23 that UNDP conducted a training course on employing persons with disabilities for staff of employment centers administered by the Tashkent City branch of the Labor Ministry. The article noted that training was "the first step" in expanding employment opportunities for persons with disabilities and reported that such trainings would continue in 2009. The article also cited "a debate" within the government on the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

14. (U) Comment: We believe that it is highly likely that the government will adopt the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons sometime next year. Given the apparent willingness of the government to engage at a high-level on the ACCESS project, we believe that it may be possible for us to pursue human rights-related cooperation with the government through programs aimed at benefiting disabled persons.

NORLAND

To view the entire SMART message, go to URL http://repository.state.sgov.gov/_layouts/OSS_SearchResults.aspx?k=messageid:eba8835c-283e-4f4b-84